

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language has an important role as a medium of communication in our daily life. People use language to deliver a message, aim, or meaning of things. Language which is a sign or a symbol, makes human identifies themselves or other aspects to understand every aspect in life easily. So human make the other aspects in symbols in order to ease them in understanding and knowing their meaning.

Culture has many symbols that can be found in life. Symbol cannot be separated from human life, it is important because it has many profits in human social life. Sometimes, every symbol has its own meaning. But, several of people can be misunderstood about the meaning of the symbol. It is because some people do not know that the symbols have the hidden meaning when they are explored. So, we have to know the symbol in every aspect of language.

Semiotics as one of linguistics branches that particularly learns about signs needs to be explored and analyzed. Semiotic is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. Semiotic involve the study not only of what is referred to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but also of anything which 'stands for' something else (Chandler 2007:21). Sign is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity (Peirce in Sobur, 2009, 2016:41). The sign

may include sounds, words, and everything that could give a guidance as a process of communication, like a house, shirt, and every symbol with meaning.

Indonesia is a pluralistic country which consists of various tribes, costumes, races, cultures, and religion. Culture itself is the hallmark of every ethnic group in Indonesia. Batak tribe is one of the ethnic groups in Indonesia. Batak tribe are still divided into various sub-tribes. Batak ethnic group is divided into six sub-tribes, based on the use of batak language which has different dialects between each sub-tribes (Joustra, in Simanjuntak 2006:18), they are: Batak Karo, in the northern part of Lake Toba; Batak Pakpak or Dairi, in the western part of Tapanuli; Batak Simalungun, in east of Lake Toba; Batak Toba, in central of Batak land and north of Padang Lawas; Batak Angkola, in Sipirok, Central Padang Lawas and southern Sibolga; Batak Mandailing, in Mandailing and southern Padang Lawas.

Among the six sub-tribes, people often consider that Batak only on the Toba tribe, even though the Batak is not only represented by the Toba tribe. So there is no Batak culture and language, but the cultures and languages of Toba, Karo, Simalungun and other allied tribes. In Batak Toba, a person will go through a cycle of life. It is begin from birth, then to adulthood, descendant and death. Related to the cycle life of Batak Toba, some ceremonies are performed as the realization of tradition, belief, and religion.

Mangirdak is one of the traditional birth ceremonies which aims to give spirit and motivation to the mother who wants to give birth and pray to God so that the child and the parent are blessed by God before and after the birth

(Siahaan, 1982:79). *Mangirdak* is also a tradition where *Parboru* (the family of the woman) comes to the *Paranak* (the family of the man) place bringing some traditional food and ulos for the event.

Mangirdak tradition is important because it is not only as the condition for the family to giving spirit and motivation to the mother, but also to maintain Batak Toba tradition. This ceremony is the evidence that bataknese do birth ceremony in Batak Toba culture.

In *Mangirdak* tradition, many sign used that related to custom and belief in Batak Toba society. Sign is used to express the purpose, respects, gratitude, feelings, and prayers. For example: *Manuk naniatur* (chicken), it has a meaning that their family will be harmony in life after the child is born.

Silalahi (2019) also conducted the same cases in Textual Meaning and Function of *Juhut (jambar)* giving. In this research *Juhut (jambar)* is the main requirement in wedding tradition of Batak Toba. For example: *paranak* giving *juhut (jambar)* is a sign of respect to *hula-hula*. In this case *juhut (jambar)* given is buffalo signifying a great honor to the *hula-hula* party (*parboru*).

The other research explain about Tradisi *Nujuh Bulanan* Masyarakat Jawa di Desa Sialang Baru Kecamatan Kabupaten Siak which was done by Muniroh (2015). Results of research conducted in general show that in the tradition of *nujuh bulanan* has experienced a change in the procedure during the first implementation that has seven steps being taken, while at the present time are made only 6 stages. The changing in this *nujuh bulanan* tradition is because of the

factor of family, tolerance, the absence of sanctions and technology. So by increasing the advance of age at the present time the above factors are influencing the course of events this *nujuh bulanan*.

The other research explains about Symbolic Meanings of *Kembar Mayang* in Javanese Wedding Ceremony at Desa Medan Sinembah Kecamatan Tanjung Morawa Kabupaten Deli Serdang which is done by Panjaitan and Manugeran (2019). The results of this research show there are five forms of symbolic meanings in *Kembar Mayang*: *Manuk-Manukan* as symbol of Loyalty; *Uler-Uleran* of Struggle; *Walang-Walangan* of Persistence; *Pecut-Pecutan* of Optimism and *Keris-Kerisan* of Wisdom. The five forms of rites are compulsory in the wedding ceremony with the main objective to achieve a happy, harmonious and peaceful life for the bride and the bridegroom and this is in line with the general concept of marriage.

The other research explain about Communication of Seven Month Pregnancy Ritual Tradition (Ethnographic Communication Study for Javanese Ethnic in Desa Pengarungan Kecamatan Torgamba Kabupaten Labuhan batu Selatan) which was done by Susanti (2015). The results obtained indicate that the communicative situation in seven monthly event is done at their own home, or parents' home of the boy and was attended by parents, neighbors, and community members Pengarungan. This communicative events is based on genre, type of events were, the topic, the purpose and function, the setting, participants, form a message, the content of the message, the rules of interaction, the norms of

interpretation. While in communicative acts such as those who know and understand the implementation of seven monthly event is host of the events in seven months.

It is important to know and understand the way of the tradition itself. By knowing the Batak tradition, people will certainly be interested in understanding the process and parts of every tradition in Batak culture. But in this technology era, many of bataknese people who live in the city did not know and understand about their own tradition. Therefore, most of their children are not interested in knowing and learning about Batak Toba culture. In fact, they cannot speak Batak Toba language. Furthermore, it influences their knowledge and understanding about custom and tradition in Batak Toba.

Based on the object and theory that have been explained, the researcher explored more detail about the Batak Toba culture. This research aimed to analyze the semiotic interpretation in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of the study were formulated in the following:

1. What types of sign are used in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba and what are their meanings?

2. How are the meaning interpreted in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba?
3. Why are the meaning interpreted in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba?

C. The Objective of the Study

As mentioned in the problem of study above, the objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the sign and their meaning that are used in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba.
2. To describe the interpretation of meaning in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba.
3. To explain the reason why the meaning interpreted in the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba as they are.

D. The Scope of the Study

To avoid an overlapping and misleading discussion, the study focused on the objects of sign by Peirce: icon, index, and symbol in the process of *Mangirdak*. The researcher analyzed the meaning of the objects that found on the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba in order to limit the research.

E. The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study were expected to have both theoretical and practical importance:

1. Theoretically, this study is expected to be useful for:

- a. Those who concern to study about symbols and meanings, especially in Batak Toba that concern on the process of *Mangirdak*.
 - b. As an additional resources for the other researchers that providing information and theories about the process of *Mangirdak* in Batak Toba.
2. Practically, the findings of the study are expected to improve knowledge about semiotic that analyzed about the cultural symbol and meaning in Batak Toba.

